Battalions, release of arms and ammunition and other security related equipment on priority basis. In addition, 17 Police Station areas in Tripura have been declared as disturbed under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in order to take more effective action against insurgent elements.

[Translation]

Policing in Hilly Districts in U.P.

1623. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the work relating to the police in rural areas of the hilly districts in UP is done by the 'Patwaris' working under the Revenue Department;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the Patwari cadre has boycotted the policing work for the last one year on the demand of pay, allowances, uniform and arms equal to the regular police personnel;

(c) whether due to boycott of policing work by the Patwaris, many cases of criminal nature are pending and the law and order situation is deteriorating; and

(d) the action being taken by the Government to end the boycott by the Patwaris ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Ban on Grazing

1624. SHRI BHIM PRASAD DAHAL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the Government are aware that Sikkim Government has banned grazing in the forest areas;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to ban grazing in all the forest areas of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal to ban grazing in all the forest areas of the country. However, the National Forests Policy, 1988 *inter-alia* envisages that grazing in forest areas should be regulated with the involvement of the community. Special conservation areas, young plantations and regeneration areas should be fully protected from grazing. National Policy also provides for levying of adequate grazing fees to discourage people in forest areas from maintaining large herds of non-essential livestock.

[Translation]

Pending Cases of Bhopal Gas Leakage Disaster

1625. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases pending in the court of Commissioner, Gas Relief, Bhopal, quarter-wise;

(b) the number of new cases filed in the office of the Commissioner during 1996-97 along with the number of cases disposed of, month-wise;

(c) whether appointment of the Hon'ble Justice as Commissioner has been made on full time or part time basis; and

(d) the location of the headquarter of the Commissioner, Gas Relief ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) The number of cases pending in the Court of the Welfare Commissioner, Bhopal gas tragedy is as follows :

Category	Pending more than 3 months	Pending more than 6 months	Pending more than 9 months	Pending more than 12 months	Total
01 (Personal injury)	77	34	259	187	557
04 (Death)	64	450	250	21	785